

# CREST: The Committee of Visitors (COV) Process

## When is this tip sheet needed?

After your CREST has ended (6 of 7).

## Concept

As required by federal regulations, CREST and other NSF programs receive a Committee of Visitors (COV) every three years. The process is similar to a program-level “panel” where past and current CREST projects are reviewed for meritorious accomplishments. It is the best opportunity to see how the recommendations to fund certain proposals versus others have paid off in contributions to the national and international community.

Fundamentally, the COV is where what the program is doing is compared to its stated goals. The review consists of (i) administrative matters (types of proposal, awards, declines, proposal-processing data, completeness of award jackets) and (ii) broader impact (contributions to the domestic and international knowledge base) via awards made. COV members are sometimes former PIs or panelists who may remember particular proposal they have declined or recommended. Of course, the same conditions of confidentiality and conflict of interest apply—COV members will not be asked to review projects in which they have some prior or current personal or professional interest.

It is not feasible to perform site visits or to hear directly from PIs during a COV review. NS program staff may not contribute any additional insight. Significantly, the, what is contained in CREST project jackets—in hardcopy or electronically—comprises the COV members’ entire view of your project’s merits. If it has not been reported, it does not “exist.”

The observations and recommendations of the COV are presented to NSF, then NF comprises a response to the COV Chair.

## Management Considerations

- ❑ You cannot directly assist a COV unless you are asked to be a COV panelist. Even so, you will not be permitted to comment on your own project.
- ❑ The data collected and presented by the program officer is what most determines whether a COV is successful. CREST awards have passed merit review t the proposal stage. Now these funded awards are merit reviewed on their outcomes. You are in the best position to improve this evaluation by administering your award cleanly and reporting your outcomes completely.

### **Administrative Considerations**

- ❑ See notes under Management Considerations.

### **Sources and Further Reading**

Consult your NSF program officer.

### **What's Next?**

You may be interested in frequently asked questions from other CREST post-awardees. >>> [NEXT \(Post-award FAQs\)](#)

[Back to CREST BPM home](#)